

# Moving a Whole Town With Tanks



Composite Photograph Showing How Houses, Stores and Other Buildings of Hibbing Are Being Hauled to a New Town Site.

**Just Because Hibbing, Minn., Happened to Be Located Over a Rich Deposit of Iron Ore It Has Got to Move Elsewhere and Now Everything Is Going, Even to the Brick Building and the Streets**

By George M. Fisher

**A**FTER the war the question arose, "What shall we do with the tanks?" The big fighting machines, land ships on wheels, had done their bit and now that the fighting was over there really didn't seem to be any practical use to which such things as tanks could be put. But since then the tanks have demonstrated that they can be useful in more ways than one. They have been used as hill climbers, passenger vehicles, "seeing-the-battlefields" omnibuses, tractors and agricultural engines. And now another new use has been found for them. They are going to be harnessed to a whole town and the town is going to be hauled to a new site one mile away. The hauling is being done in sections, it is true, but by the time the tanks get through with the job they will have moved everything from business blocks to street pavements, and even the telephone poles.

It is Hibbing, the world's richest town, that is being moved. Located in the heart of the iron-ore district of Northern Minnesota, it must make way for extensive mining operations by the United States Steel Corporation.

For twenty years it has been common knowledge to the townspeople that the ore body in the east, west and north sides of the original town site of Hibbing, extended under the principal business section. This ore, the big mining interests wanted and wanted badly.

## Getting Off the Earth

For the last ten years the most densely populated district of Hibbing has been surrounded by open pits, making it impossible for the town to expand. The northerly extremity extends out thumb-like and somewhat like a plateau, some of its buildings being perched on the edge of the wide gorge, hewn deep into the earth. Since the original townsite was laid out, the mines have steadily encroached on it, the Sellers from the north and east and the Rust mine from the west.

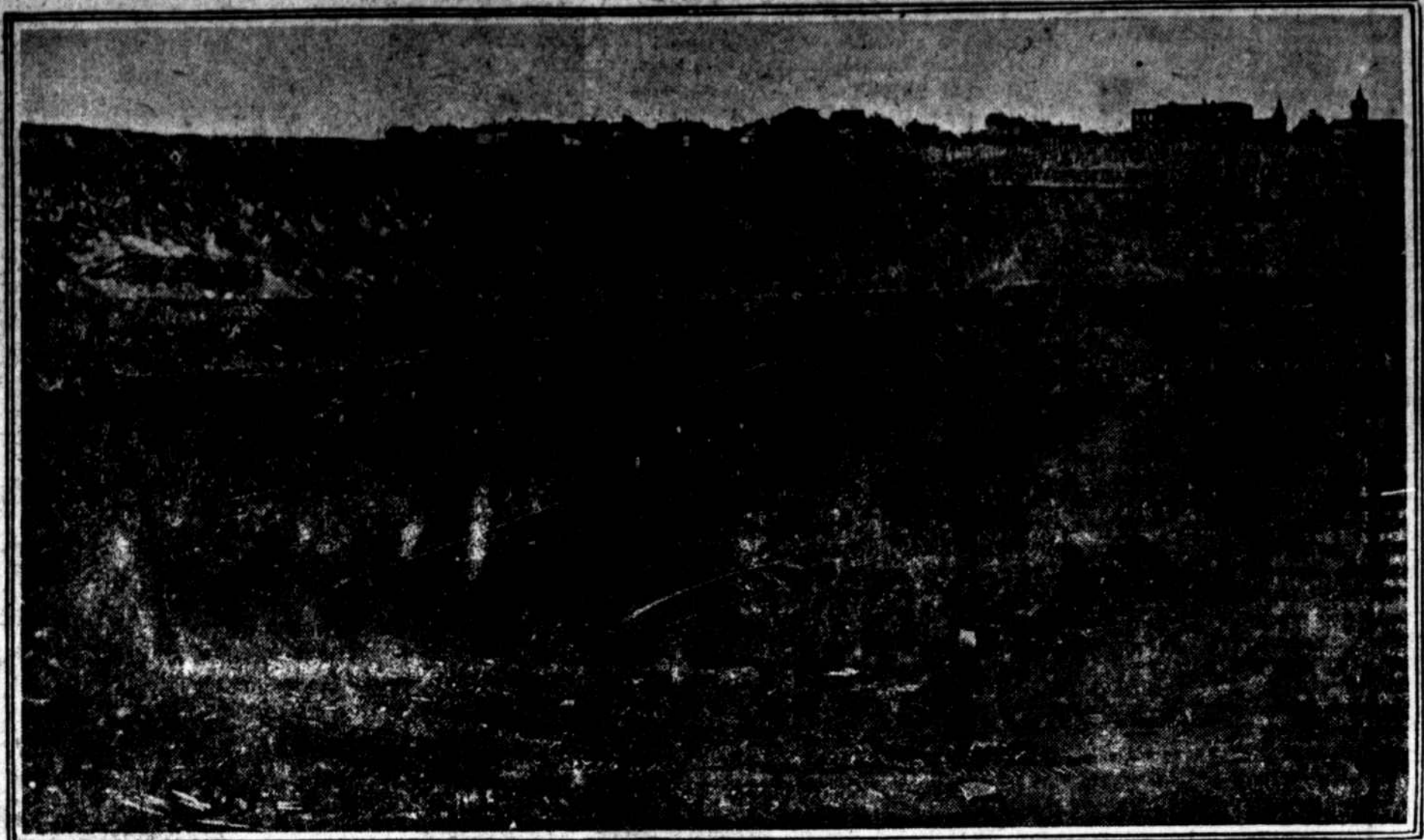
The Oliver Company, subsidiary of the United States Steel Corporation, had already acquired

one mile away was the Central Addition, owned by the mining company, and here is to be the "New Hibbing."

The first buildings were moved from the original townsite to the new addition in September, 1918. All frame buildings in good condition have been transferred and brick buildings are being moved next. Structures that are in poor condition are being torn down. About eighty dwellings, twelve frame buildings and eight brick business blocks will be "on the move" shortly.

The City Hall, the finest and largest building to be moved, and worth over \$100,000, presents some difficulties to the house-moving firms at work there. In order to transfer it, it will be necessary to set back telephone posts on one of the main streets and remove temporarily the fence and the part of the grand stand of the town's baseball park. The cost of moving this building will be \$80,000.

When the village authorities abandon the



The Old Town of Hibbing Stands Today Surrounded by Huge Chasms and Ore Pits and Has Been Actually Forced to Find New Quarters Where it Would Be Secure from Mining Operations.

town of Hibbing, and the Mesaba Electric Railway Company, to enjoin the town from disposing of its property in the original townsite, enjoining the vacation of streets, enjoining the railway company from removing its tracks, and enjoining the Oliver Company from doing certain things which would permit the mining of the northerly forty acres.

They suggested that the Oliver Company purchase their property, but it has no interest in the ore underlying the Pillsbury or Southern additions. The application for a temporary injunction was argued Nov. 28 and 29, and was taken under advisement.

For many years the Great Northern Railroad Company's tracks entering Hibbing have skirted the southerly edge of the Hull-Rust mine for a distance of about a mile and a half. The Great Northern held this right of way, subject to mineral reservations. The Oliver Company indicated to the company that the location of the tracks was delaying mining operations in the Hull-Rust mine and preventing its extension to the south.

Accordingly, the Great Northern made an application to the Minnesota Railroad and Warehouse Commission for leave to abandon the tracks of the Duluth, Mesaba & Northern Railroad Company, at the southerly edge of the Southern Addition, and nearer the Central Addition. This application was granted and the railroad company started to tear up the tracks. The Oliver Company's stripping shovels followed quickly along and tore up the roadbed. The plaintiffs in the original injunction suit rushed back into court to stop this work, and the case is still hanging fire.

## Moving Day Compensations

Moving day for Hibbing was not without its reward, however. Among buildings erected by the United States Steel Corporation in the new Hibbing is a \$350,000 hospital and a \$350,000 hotel. The old Hibbing, a typical mining town of many modern buildings, is to be replaced by a modern city with modern brick buildings, wider streets and more up-to-date conveniences.



Handsome Business Houses at Hibbing, Built of Brick and Concrete. These Buildings Are to Be Moved Bodily to the New Town Site.

steam log haulers and tanks of the caterpillar type. This seems to be most satisfactory, although garages and small buildings have been moved with tractors.

The Central Addition, where all of these buildings have been moved, is growing very rapidly. Since last September sixty-two buildings, dwellings and three store buildings have been moved on to the site and twenty-four new buildings have been built. The new village power plant, including the municipal heating system, is nearly completed at an estimated cost of \$1,000,000.

## Steam Shovels and Law Suits

In order to allow the new addition to connect up with other residential sectors, a track filled along the east edge of the addition with thousands of tons of earth, has to be removed and huge steam shovels, the largest in the world, are cutting gaps into the earth banks. Within another year, the mining company officials say, there will be little left of what was the original business section of Hibbing.

Recently fifteen persons residing in the southern end of the business and residential district, the Pillsbury and Southern additions, and in the townsite of Stuntz, just outside of the village, began an action against the Oliver Company, the

## The Reindeer Queen of Alaska

**W**HEN in 1893 the United States government decided to import reindeer from Siberia to Alaska and had sent Lieut. Berthoff, in the revenue cutter Bear, to negotiate the purchase, Mary Antisarok, half Russian, half Eskimo, was a round-faced bright-eyed, sleek haired young woman; pretty and a newly married bride. He needed an interpreter, speaking both Russian and Eskimo, and Mary was engaged.

She was glad of the opportunity, but unwilling to leave her husband; so he was engaged, too, as a sort of odd job man aboard; but Mary was the recognized head of the Antisarok firm. She made herself intelligently and successfully useful among the natives with whom it was necessary to deal, and on returning to Alaska she was well paid with a goodly number of reindeer.

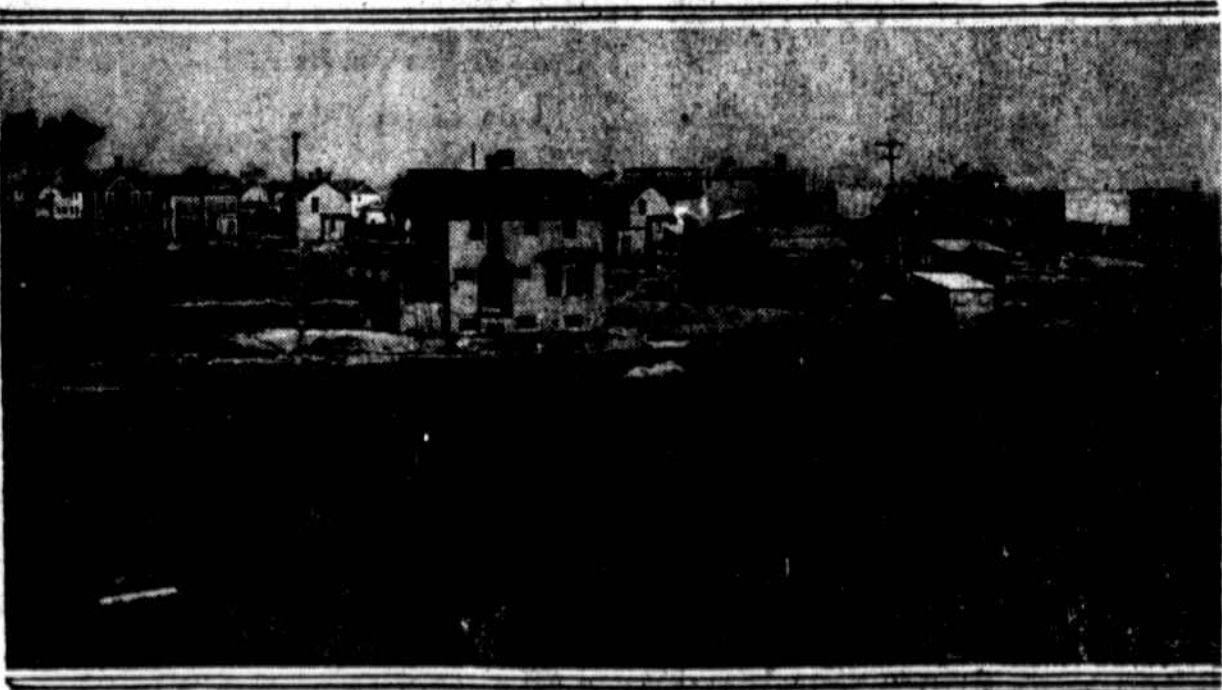
These animals, according to the Sunset Magazine, were the origin of a herd that flourished and increased amazingly, and became, indeed, several herds. Mary is now raising deer enough to supply thousands of consumers, and reindeer meat is tender, palatable and delicious, so much so that, but for the difficulties of transportation, it would probably become a staple food throughout the country. Mary is a rich woman, but she lives simply in a cluster of cabins, perched upon a rocky promontory thrusting seaward, fringed with ever beating surf.

It is known that, although open-handed and free, Mary is a shrewd bargainer and possesses remarkable commercial sagacity. Few traders, if any, have been able to get the advantage of her in a business deal.

Toward the hungry, the helpless, and little children her tenderness is unfailing and her bounty lavish. She has no children of her own, but she has adopted a numerous family—not a pretty baby or two carefully selected for health and charm and promise, but such forlorn, abandoned, and neglected waifs and strays as came under her notice in a remote and lawless zone. There are all races and colors, declares her biographer, Nona Marquis Snyder, but Mary is mercifully color blind!

One deed of generosity, dating back to the earlier years of her prosperity, will never be forgotten in Alaska. In 1898, only five years after the founding of her herd of reindeer, word came that more than 400 whalers had been caught in the ice packs of Point Barrow and were slowly freezing and starving. They were 500 miles away from Mary Antisarok's snow-covered cabin; they were many more miles distant—and miles of the northern wilderness, icy, rocky, storm-swept, and terrible—from sources of civilized supply. Quite simply and as a matter of course, Mary, reserving only a few head for domestic necessity, started her whole herd of reindeer northward to the rescue. She received no personal appeal, asked no advice, awaited no instructions, made neither bargain nor effort to protect her interests. She saw her chance for first aid, and gave it, instantly and wholeheartedly.

Later the government replaced the sacrificed deer with interest and gave her the thanks she deserved. But since that day it is for more than her business ability that the reindeer queen is respected throughout Alaska.



This Is How the New Town of Hibbing Looked After the First Few Houses Had Been Hauled There from the Old Town.

the right to the minerals under part of the town by lease in 1899, and two years ago began to buy surface rights. It paid \$2,500,000 for them and today owns the majority of lots and buildings in an area of more than eight city blocks.

After these purchases were made it became necessary to acquire a new location for that portion of the town that had to be transplanted. One

streets, 40,000 yards of wood paving block laid seven years ago will be removed and laid down in the streets of the new location. Lamp posts, electric light poles, light wires, hydrants, man-hole rings, covers, fire alarm boxes and trees on the boulevards will all go from the "Old Hibbing" to the "New."

The moving of the buildings has been done by